

**CONNECTIVE3**

# The shifting landscape of travel demand: AI, social & smarter spend

David White

Chief Growth Officer, Connective3



# Nice to meet you all

David White, CGO at connective3

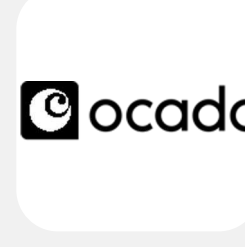
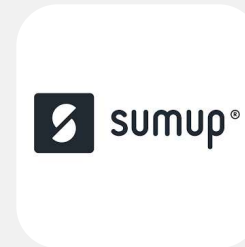
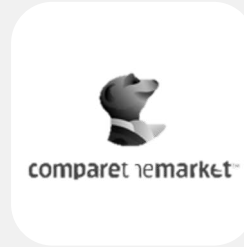


Our experience

# We make the best brands **even better.**

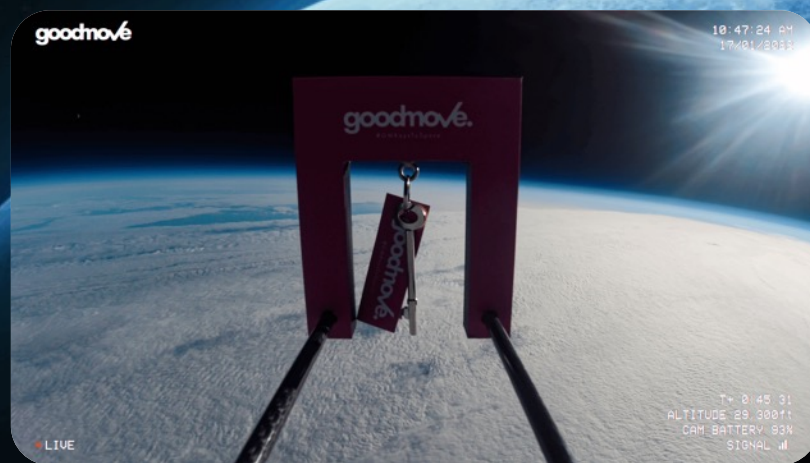
Connective3 is a performance marketing agency with extensive experience across multiple sectors including Finance, Beauty, Retail, Ecommerce, **Travel** and more.

With specialists across a broad range of sectors, we offer strategies that drive your marketing performance across our core services. And with international teams in-house, we're able to scale our approach globally.



I have been running **SEO**  
**campaigns** and **attention**  
**seeking** for 12 years

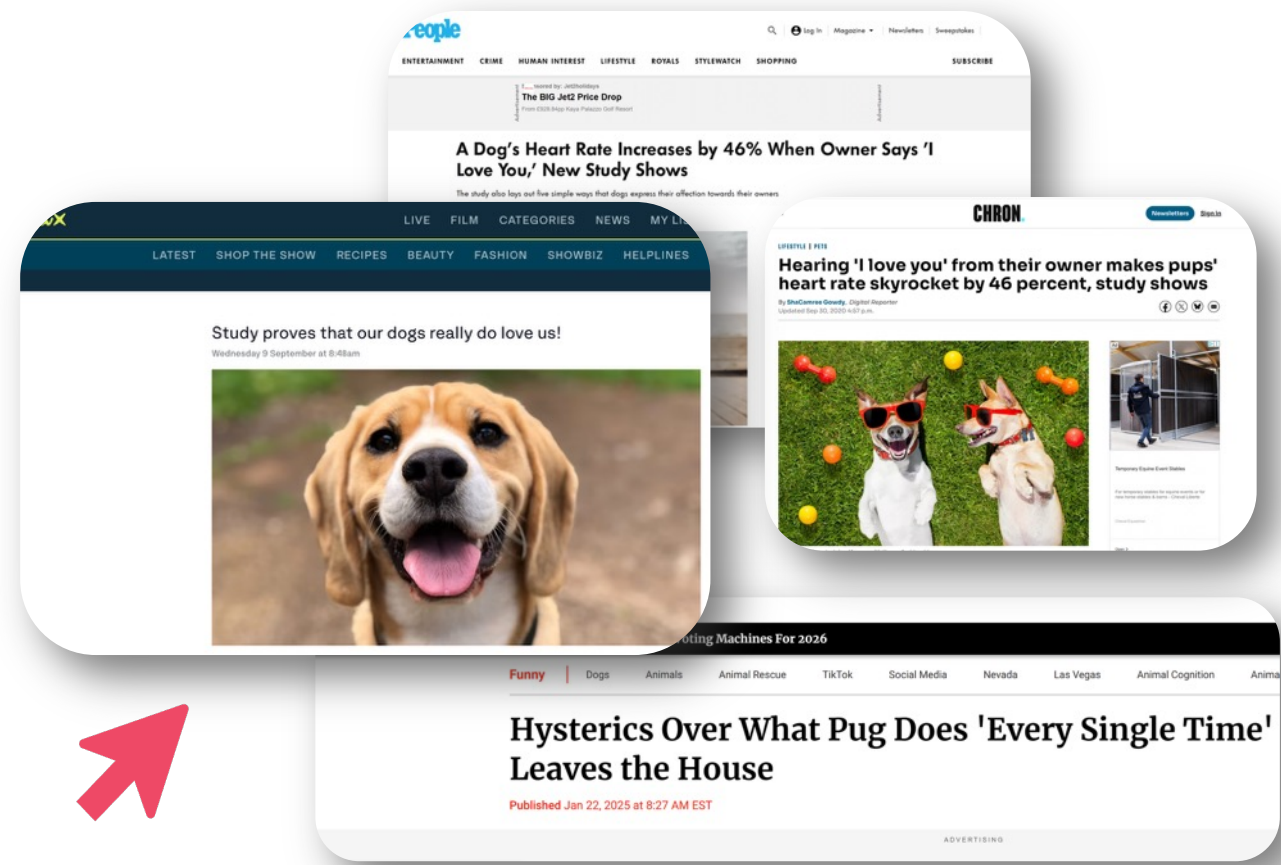
## From sending keys to space...



# ...to making my dog build over 500 links!



Meet Milo :)



Attention seeking

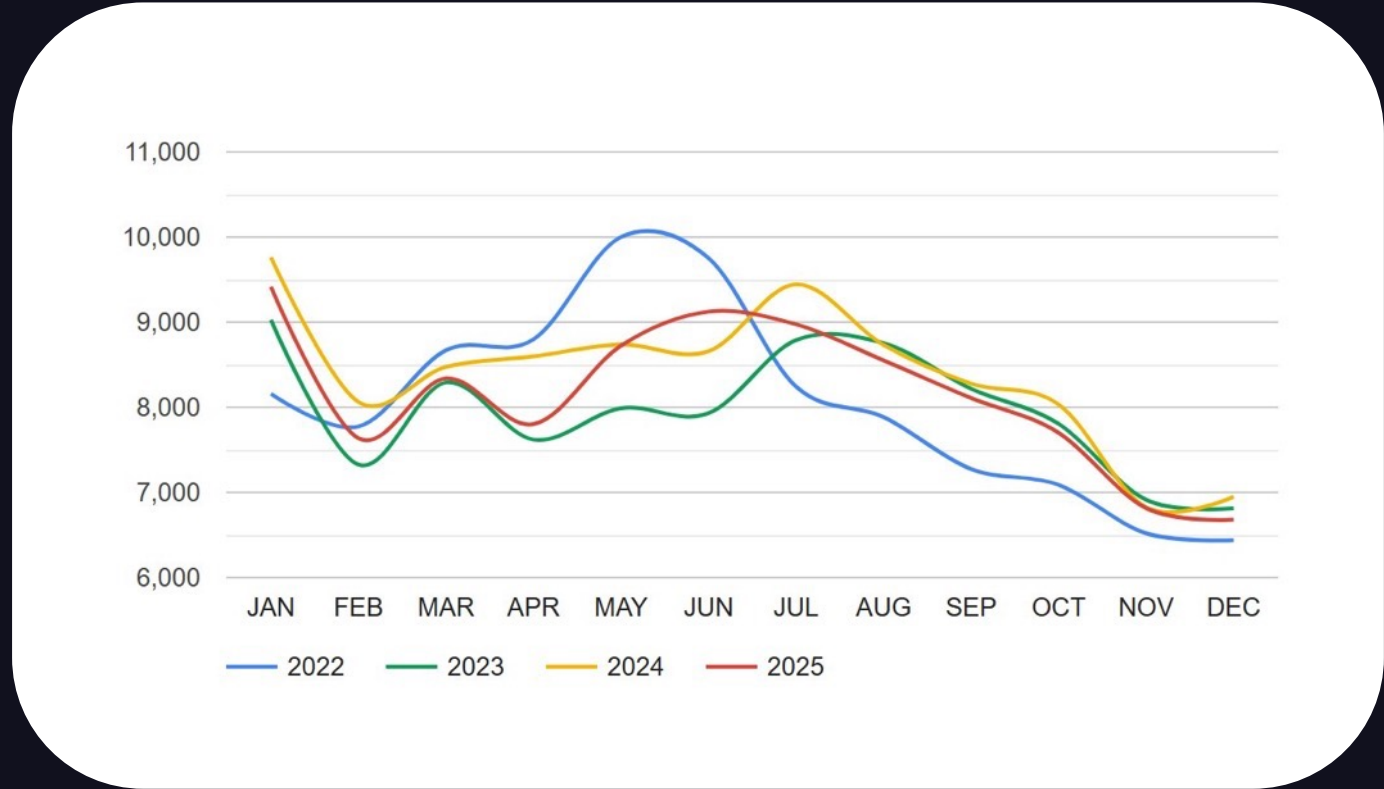
However, in the last year, the customer journey has shifted dramatically (especially when looking at what content influences customer decisions)

My goal today is to show how we can **adapt** and **use that shift** to our advantage

But first, let's start with  
travel demand online

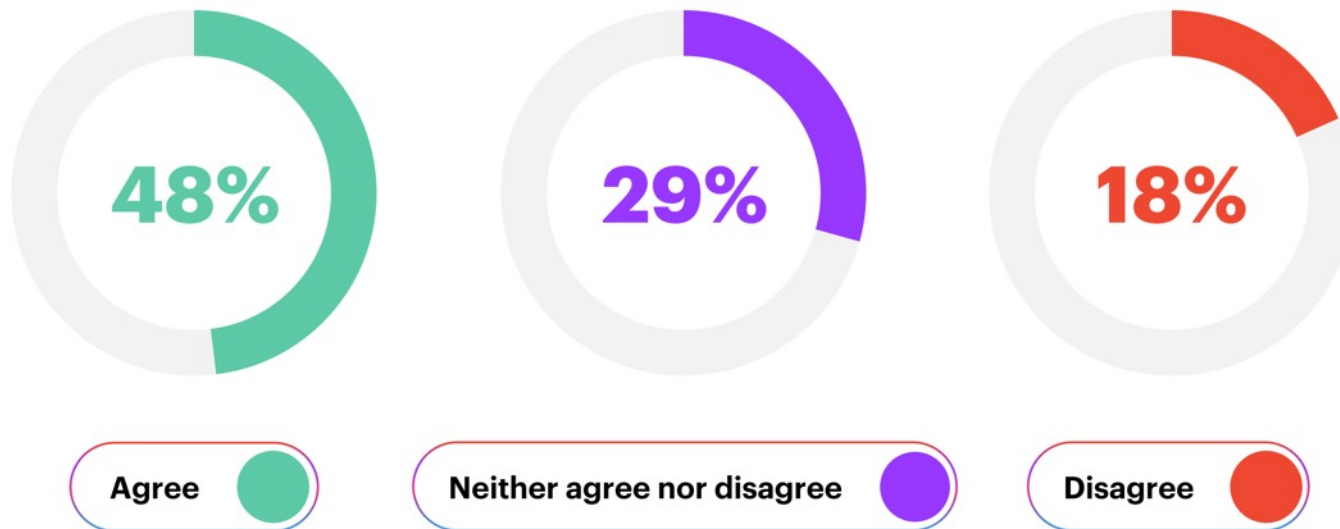
## Customer and market

# Demand for travel last year was slightly behind YOY





## Rising costs are a major driver of this shift, as consumers become increasingly value-focused



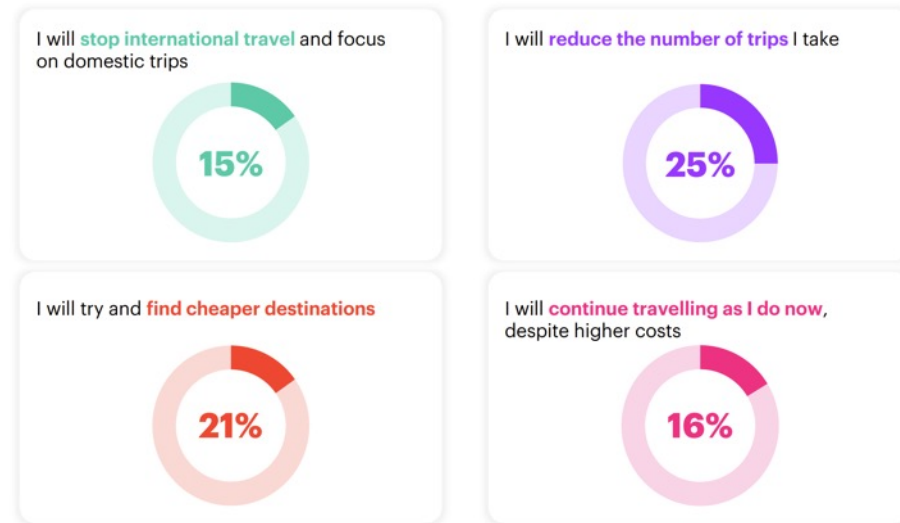
**Half of** international travellers agree that rising expenses have impacted their global travel plans. Just one in five disagree.



Rising costs are a major driver of this shift, as consumers become increasingly value-focused

## Two in five international travellers will reduce their overseas trips in 2026

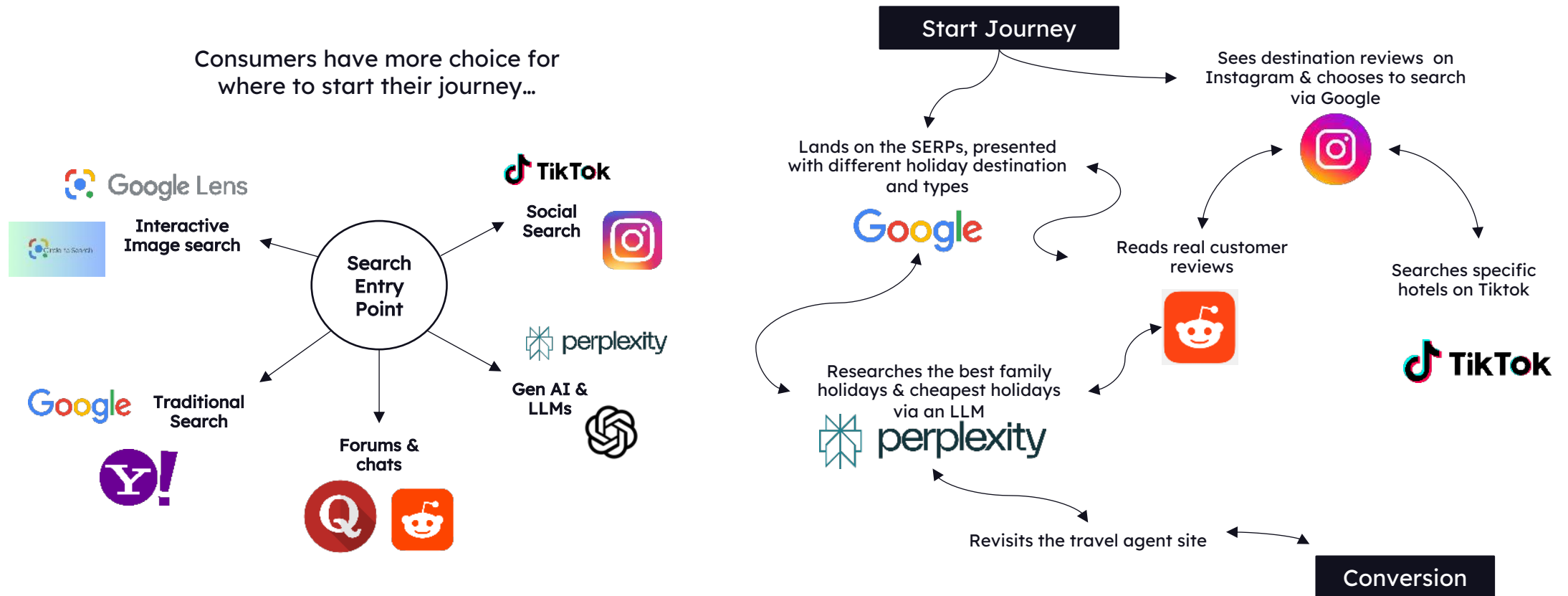
If international travel prices rise in 2026, how do you expect your behaviour will change? (% of British international travellers)



This rise in cost is playing directly into the consideration stage of the customer journey as **39% of consumers** now **compare and research** prices more carefully before making a purchase

Behavioural change

## The customer journey is more fragmented than ever

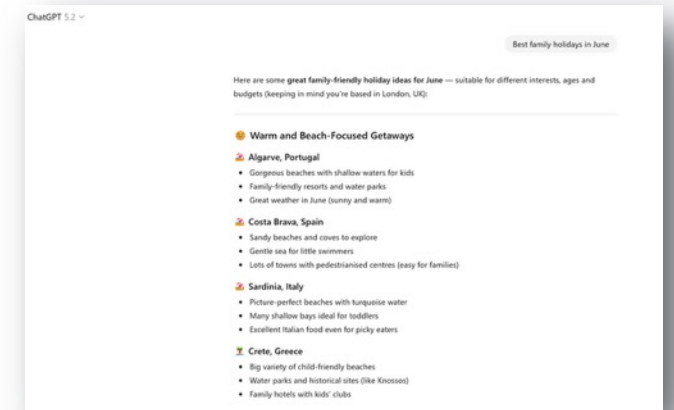
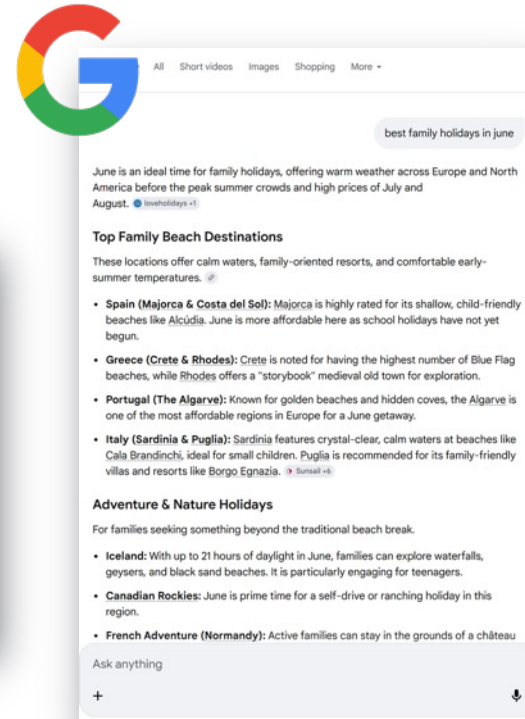
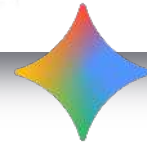
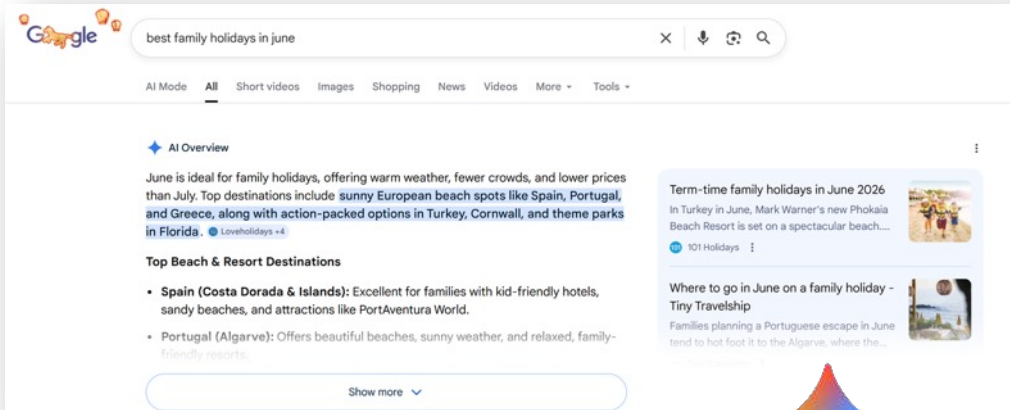


We know more consumers are comparing and researching, and we know the customer journey is increasingly fragmented...

Surely it **can't get any more complex**, can it?



## Unfortunately, yes... it can also mean less traffic to your site as AI search steals your clicks



Search change

# AIO's are encouraging zero click searches

Page one keywords (May 25)	Page one keywords (Dec 24)	% change
683	659	6.30%

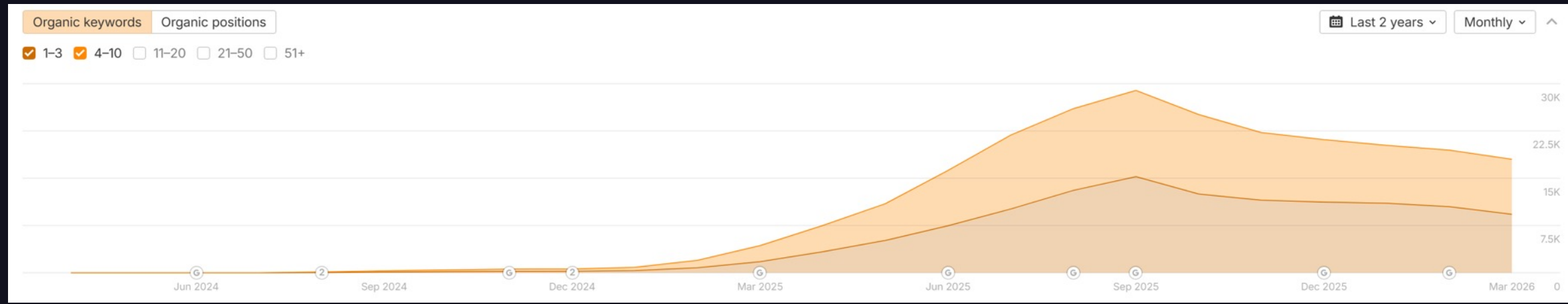
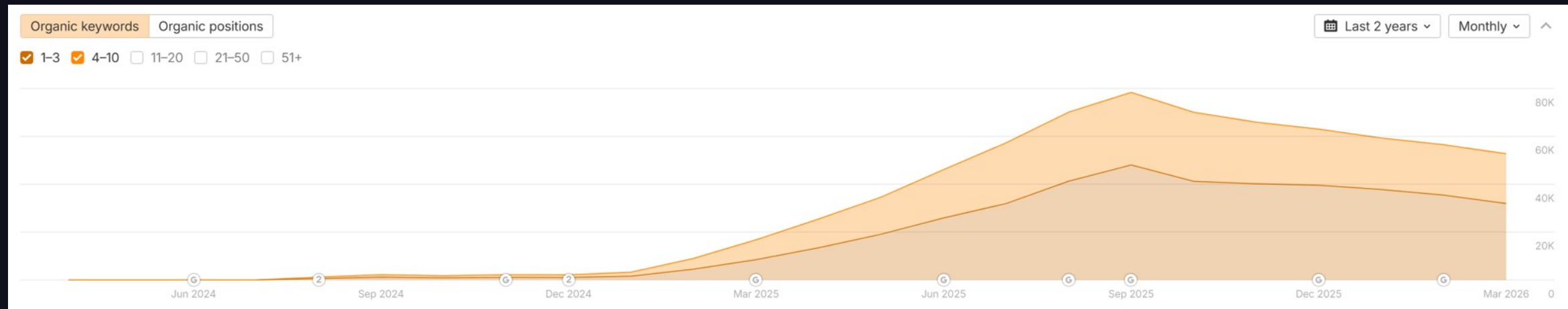
Page one search vol (May 25)	Page one search vol (Dec 24)	% change
60810	59130	2.80%

AIO search vol (May 25)	AIO search vol (Dec 24)	% change
51%	5%	920%

Search change

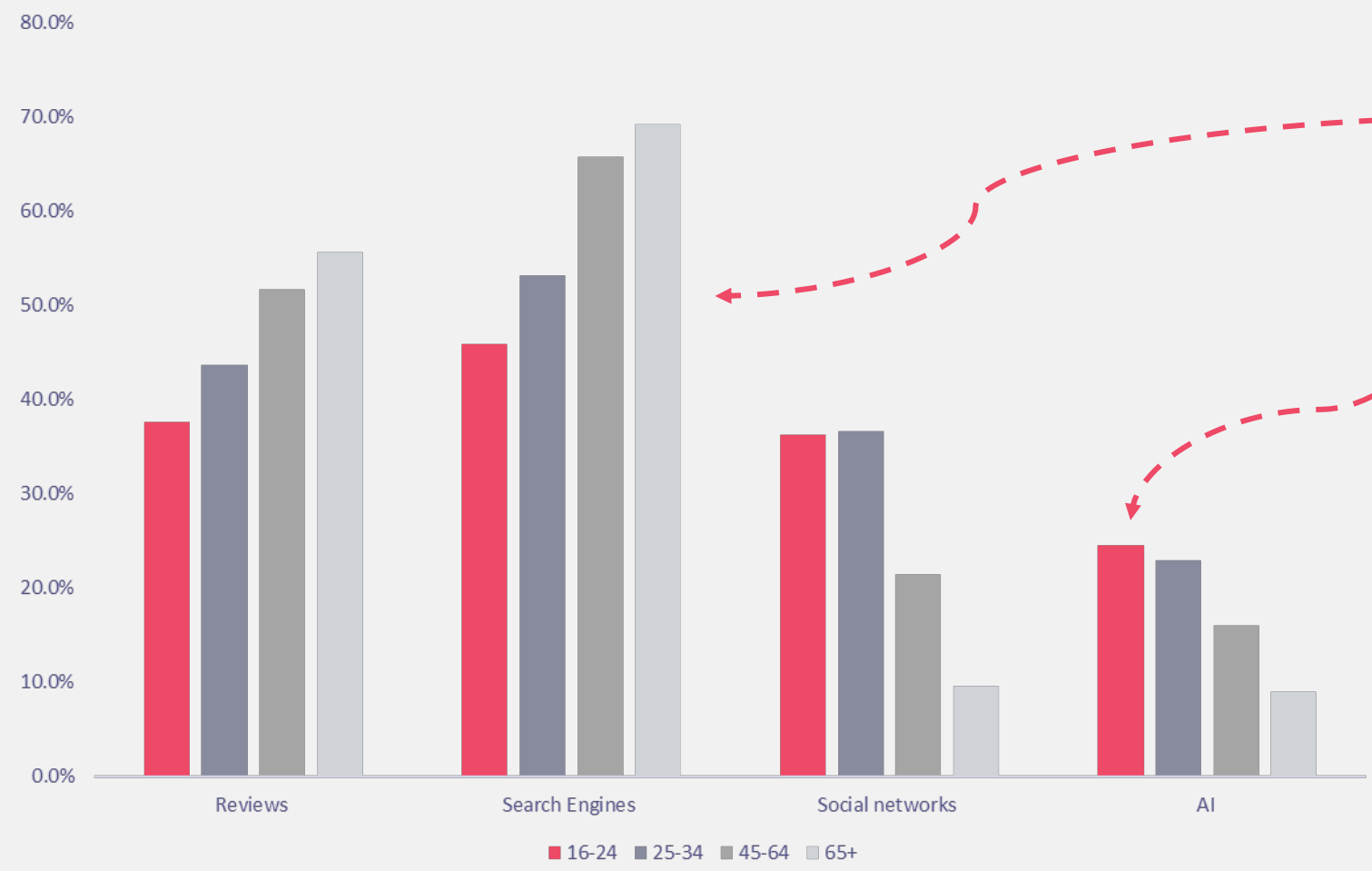
## AIO's are increasing in numbers



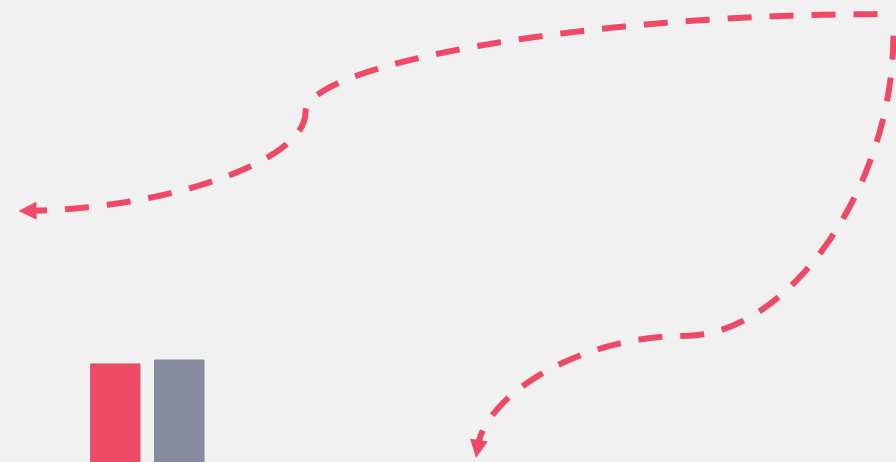
With the customer journey shifting and traffic becoming less predictable, the focus turns to understanding **how people are purchasing today** and how brands can compete effectively within that landscape

## Customer journey

# How people are buying today



Remember AIO's and no links can appear



Current search landscape

# AI might be the smallest opp for now but it's growing quickly

As user behaviour continues to change and LLMs include more links to websites in their results, we must be prepared to future-proof and capitalise on a growing trend of people who are searching for relevant keywords using LLMs.



# Appearing everywhere is key to future growth

A connected channel approach to organic search, in a dynamic landscape where **appearing everywhere** is crucial to winning both in **traditional search** and **AI**.



## Power of brand

LLMs surface social and on-site content – being **omnipresent** and having a **connected strategy** is key for ranking in LLMs and Google. **Appearing everywhere** from social sites to review platforms.

## Digital PR and social

Continues to be important for **brand mentions** as well as links.  
  
On and off-site topical salience.

## Trust

Leveraging **and experts for E-E-A-T**; and highlighting trust signals on-site.

## Content

Write for **LLMs** with correct information architecture, answer specific questions, and anticipating follow up questions.

## Technical

**Schema mark-up** becomes more important, as well as having a technically sound site.

So how do we create content that  
**appears** across the whole digital  
landscape and **connects** with today's  
customer journey?

Imagine we are a cruise brand



I asked AI to design me a cruise ship with the connective3 logo on :/

Firstly, start by identifying the opportunity across search  
(the whole of search)

# How to calculate traffic share % (not just Google visibility)

Domain	General Cruise Searches	Destinations / Regions	Deals & Discounts	Booking & Agencies	Total Organic Traffic index
www.royalcaribbean.com	74.2%	77.6%	85.8%	37.4%	75.4%
www.ncl.com	23.5%	42.7%	18.2%	7.5%	27.0%
www.carnival.com	40.1%	34.3%	18.3%	17.7%	36.2%
www.cruisecritic.com	10.9%	14.6%	2.9%	5.0%	10.8%
www.tripadvisor.com	11.9%	4.5%	6.2%	4.9%	9.5%
www.reddit.com	10.0%	14.9%	11.9%	26.9%	11.5%
www.princess.com	27.4%	61.6%	9.4%	3.0%	32.8%
www.expedia.com	19.9%	3.3%	13.9%	17.2%	15.5%
www.msccruisesusa.com	21.8%	25.6%	19.2%	10.0%	22.1%
www.celebritycruises.com	10.8%	15.5%	11.1%	1.4%	11.7%
disneycruise.disney.go.com	9.3%	9.6%	0.8%	3.5%	8.4%
www.virginvoyages.com	3.4%	6.0%	1.8%	4.2%	3.8%
www.costcotravel.com	6.8%	4.0%	22.4%	3.1%	7.6%
www.vacationstogo.com	5.6%	0.6%	22.2%	8.0%	6.2%
www.hollandamerica.com	3.7%	25.1%	1.4%	0.4%	8.2%
www.cruisedirect.com	3.0%	1.5%	6.8%	37.8%	3.6%
Number of Keywords	437	73	46	17	573
Search Volume	1,164,500	393,100	174,500	30,500	1,762,600
Potential Traffic	225,331	76,065	33,766	5,902	341,063

## Search change

Work out your visibility in LLM's and the prompts people search for

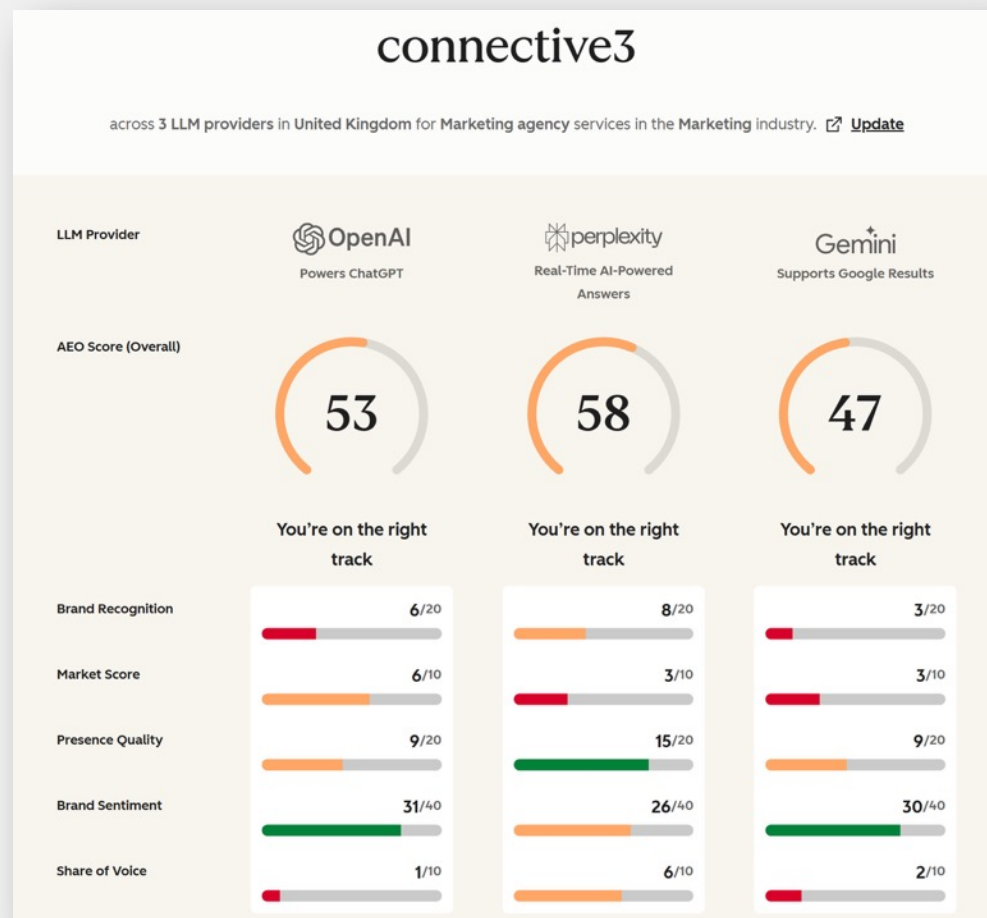


## Search change

# Work out your visibility in LLM's and the prompts people search for

<input type="checkbox"/> Prompt	Volume	AI Overview	Mentions	Citations	Updated
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">city breaks 2026</a> <small>Q</small>	8.1K	Top 2026 city breaks include classic European favorites like Rome, Barcelona, Paris, and Prague , alongside winter-friendly options such as Reykjavik (Northern Lights) and Krakow for Christmas markets. For warmer or unique experie... <a href="#">Show more</a>	Tui Jet2	+4	5 d ago
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">jobs abroad</a> <small>Q</small>	3.4K	Finding jobs abroad is achievable through multinational company transfers , specialized international job boards (LinkedIn, Anywork Anywhere , EURES ), and working holiday visas in countries like Australia, New Zealand, and Canada... <a href="#">Show more</a>	Tui Jet2	+5	2 d ago
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">skyscanner birmingham</a> <small>Q</small>	2.9K	Skyscanner offers numerous budget-friendly flights from Birmingham Airport ( BHX ), with return tickets to destinations like Barcelona, Geneva, and Paris available for around £24-£26 in spring 2026 . Popular routes include easyJet t... <a href="#">Show more</a>	Tui Jet2	No citations	1 d ago
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">cabin luggage size</a> <small>Q</small>	2.5K	View all Standard cabin bag sizes vary by airline, but generally, a "large" overhead cabin bag is roughly 55 x 40 x 20cm to 56 x 45 x 25cm (including wheels/handles). For budget airlines like Ryanair and easyJet, the free under-se... <a href="#">Show more</a>	Tui Jet2	+4	1 d ago
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">flight attendant salary</a> <small>Q</small>	2.5K	In the UK, flight attendant salaries generally start around £19,000-£23,000 for new recruits, rising to £26,000-£30,000+ for experienced crew . Total earnings often exceed base pay due to hourly flying pay, layover allowances, and... <a href="#">Show more</a>	Tui Jet2	+2	5 d ago
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">uk to morocco flight time</a> <small>Q</small>	1.4K	Direct flights from the UK to Morocco typically take between 3 and 4 hours , generally averaging around 3 hours and 30 minutes to 3 hours 45 minutes for popular routes to Marrakech, Agadir, and Casablanca. Flights departing from L... <a href="#">Show more</a>	Tui Jet2	+1	1 d ago
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">stansted departure board</a> <small>Q</small>	1.4K	Live flight departures from London Stansted Airport ( STN ) show numerous daily, early-morning flights primarily operated by Ryanair and Jet2 to European destinations such as Rome, Lisbon, Alicante, and Milan. For real-time updates... <a href="#">Show more</a>	Tui Jet2		8 d ago
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">rhodes in april</a> <small>Q</small>	1.4K	Rhodes in April is a delightful, quiet, and green spring destination, featuring temperatures between 14°C and 21°C, 9 hours of daily sunshine, and occasional light, short showers . It is ideal for hiking, exploring the UNESCO-list... <a href="#">Show more</a>	Tui Jet2	+1	2 d ago
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">uk airlines</a> <small>Q</small>	1.4K	Major UK airlines operating in 2026 include British Airways, easyJet, TUI Airways, Virgin Atlantic, and Jet2 , which dominate both domestic and international travel. British Airways acts as the flag carrier, while budget carriers... <a href="#">Show more</a>	Tui Jet2		17 Feb 2026
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">flight time to egypt from uk</a> <small>Q</small>	1.3K	Direct flights from the UK to Egypt typically take between 4 hours 40 minutes and 5 hours 30 minutes , depending on the destination (Cairo, Hurghada, or Sharm El Sheikh) and departure airport. Flights from London to Cairo average... <a href="#">Show more</a>	Tui Jet2	+1	3 d ago
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">ayia napa airport</a> <small>Q</small>	1.3K	Larnaca International Airport ( LCA ) is the primary airport serving Ayia Napa, located approximately 46km (about 40-45 minutes by car) away. It is the main hub for accessing the resort, with taxi, bus, and transfer services readily... <a href="#">Show more</a>	Tui Jet2	+4	2 d ago

# Quick win (tip)



<https://www.hubspot.com/aeo-grader>

## How to understand which AIOs you're appearing in compared to the competition and what your SERPs look like

Monthly volume | United Kingdom | Position | Intents | Lowest DR | Volume | KD | CPC | Organic traffic | Paid traffic | SERP features: Current include target in | Add filter

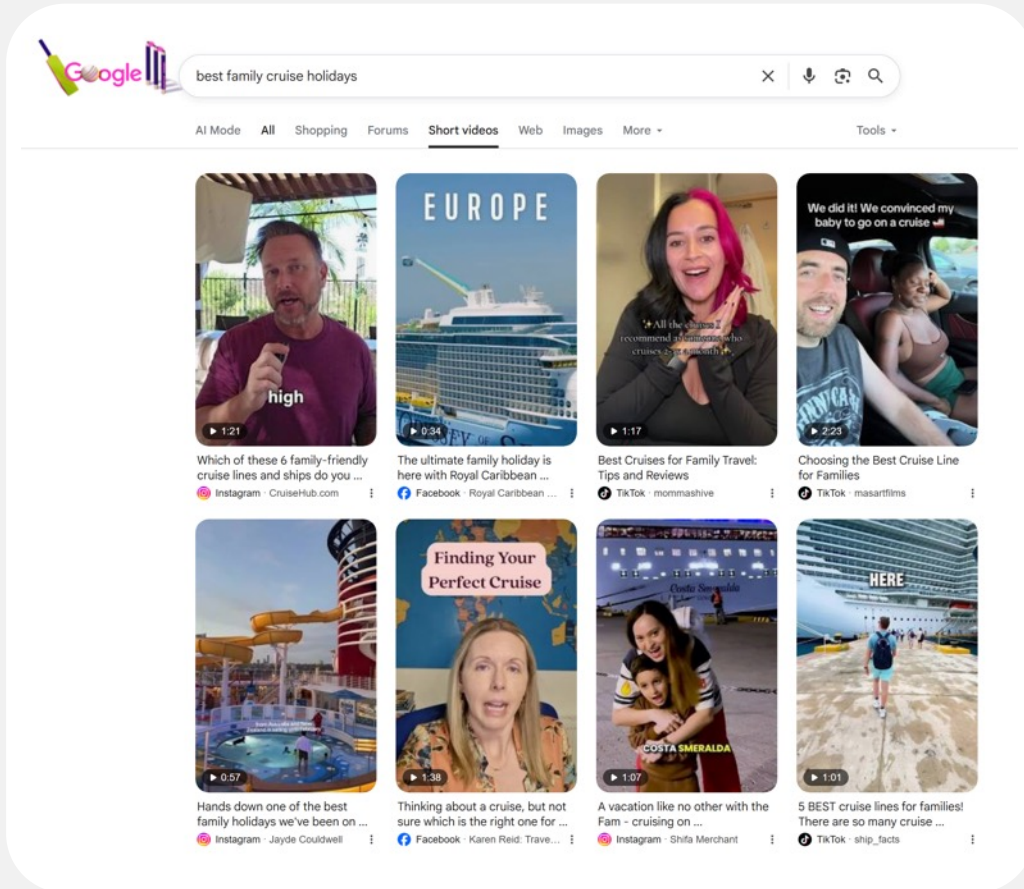
Keywords by position  
 1-3  4-10  11-20  21-50  51+

2 Jun 2015 | 12 Nov 2016 | 25 Apr 2018 | 6 Oct 2019 | 18 Mar 2021 | 29 Aug 2022

108 keywords | 1 Feb 2025 | Don't compare | Filters

Keyword	Intents	SF	Volume	KD	CPC	Traffic	Paid	Position	URL	SERP	Date
how to measure carpet	1	4	350	0	0.17	116	0	1	<a href="https://www.tapi.co.uk/the-ideas-hub/diy-corner/how-to-measure-a-room">https://www.tapi.co.uk/the-ideas-hub/diy-corner/how-to-measure-a-room</a>	SERP	1 Feb 2025
how to fix burnt carpet	1	5	300	0	0.22	76	0	1	<a href="https://www.tapi.co.uk/the-ideas-hub/care-guides/how-to-get-burns-out-of-carpet">https://www.tapi.co.uk/the-ideas-hub/care-guides/how-to-get-burns-out-of-carpet</a>	SERP	31 Jan 202
how much to carpet a room	1	5	900	2	0.61	74	0	1	<a href="https://www.tapi.co.uk/the-ideas-hub/care-guides/how-to-budget-for-new-flooring">https://www.tapi.co.uk/the-ideas-hub/care-guides/how-to-budget-for-new-flooring</a>	SERP	27 Jan 202
best way to clean lvt flooring	1	3	200	1	0.13	69	0	1	<a href="https://www.tapi.co.uk/the-ideas-hub/care-guides/luxury-vinyl-tile-care-guide">https://www.tapi.co.uk/the-ideas-hub/care-guides/luxury-vinyl-tile-care-guide</a>	SERP	30 Jan 202
how to remove iron burn from carpet	1	4	150	0	0.15	55	0	1	<a href="https://www.tapi.co.uk/the-ideas-hub/care-guides/how-to-get-burns-out-of-carpet">https://www.tapi.co.uk/the-ideas-hub/care-guides/how-to-get-burns-out-of-carpet</a>	SERP	20 Jan 202
how to lift carpet	1	4	200	1	0.09	53	0	1	<a href="https://www.tapi.co.uk/the-ideas-hub/diy-corner/how-to-uptift-and-remove-carpet">https://www.tapi.co.uk/the-ideas-hub/diy-corner/how-to-uptift-and-remove-carpet</a>	SERP	29 Jan 202

# Ensure your content is multi format



## YouTube

Keyword	Search volume
all inclusive adult only resorts	46,400
cheap family holidays	7600
Corfu weather October	17,000

## TikTok

Keyword	Search volume
all inclusive holidays on a budget	31,700
family holidays luxury	1000
Corfu weather October	11,600

Researching popular search terms to deliver the highest performing YouTube Short on Wren's channel

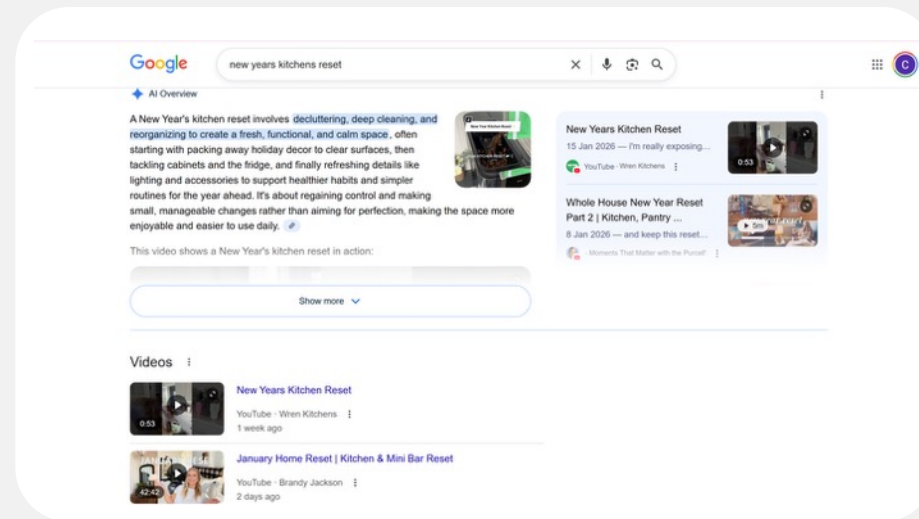
+91%

Increase on the previous most-viewed YouTube Short (11k to 21k)

93%

Total video traffic driven from Google, equating to 19.7k total views

**wren**  
KITCHENS

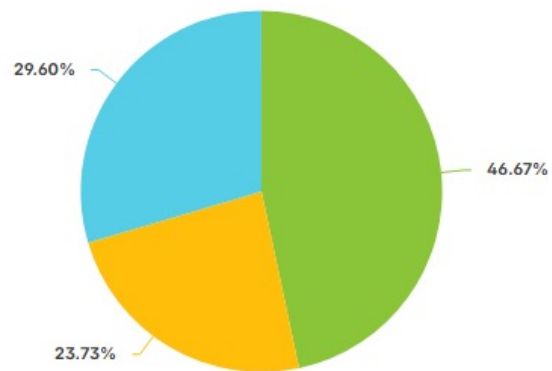


C3 x OC&C

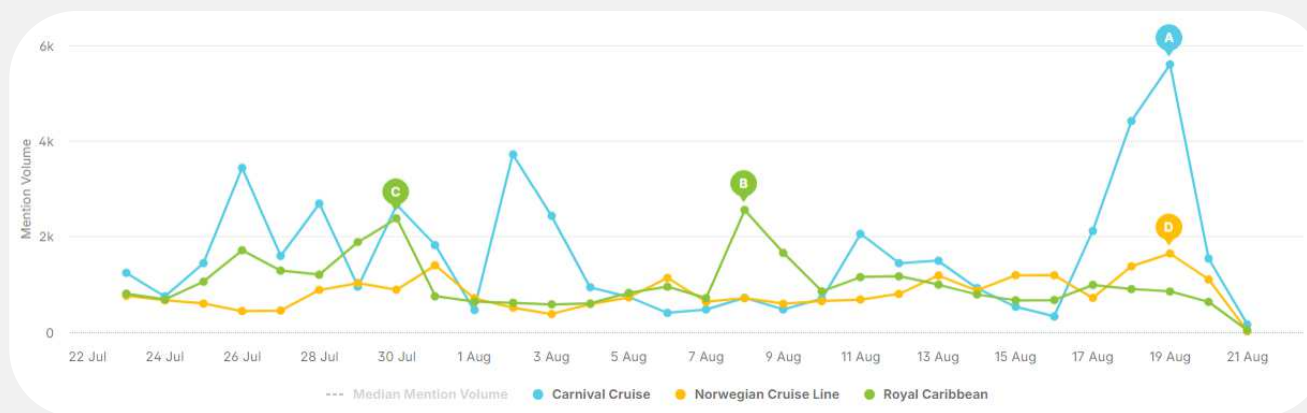
Travel in 2026



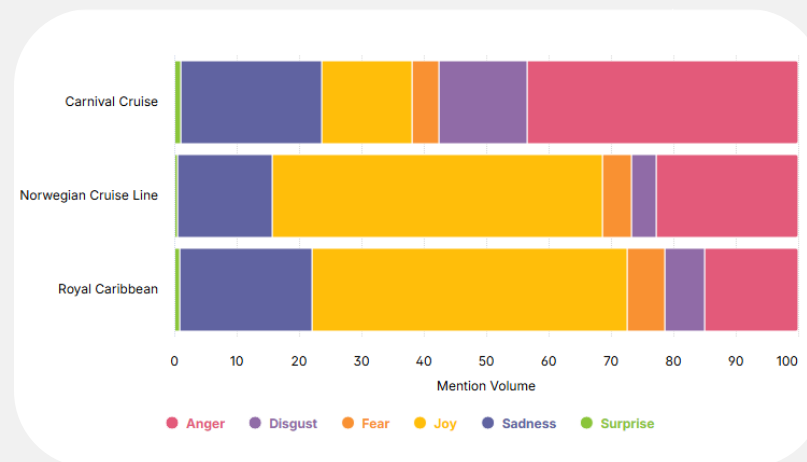
## And now check, who is winning on social



● Carnival Cruise ● Norwegian Cruise Line ● Royal Caribbean



--- Median Mention Volume ● Carnival Cruise ● Norwegian Cruise Line ● Royal Caribbean



● Anger ● Disgust ● Fear ● Joy ● Sadness ● Surprise

Finally make sure you **track** the  
brand impact of all PR

Brand mentions are the **#1 factor** driving AI search visibility

The Ahrefs logo, featuring the word "ahrefs" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font on a blue rectangular background.

## The study

- Ahrefs analysed over 75,000 brands to determine what factors most strongly correlate with being mentioned in Google AI Overviews

## The outcome

- Branded web mentions had a higher correlation (0.66) with AI visibility than Domain Rating (0.32) or the sheer volume of content.
- Brands in the top 25% for web mentions had 10× more AI mentions than the next tier down — proof that how you're mentioned matters more than traditional SEO metrics.

## What the data showed

66%

Correlation with AI visibility

10x

More citations for top brands

2x

Stronger signals than backlinks

# Measuring brand impact of all PR

## Total Stats

Jan 1, 2025 - Dec 31, 2025 vs Jan 2, 2024 - Dec 31, 2024

Brand Signal

58.5 vs 0

Total Brand Mentions

513 vs 0

Brand Prominence

54.9 vs 0

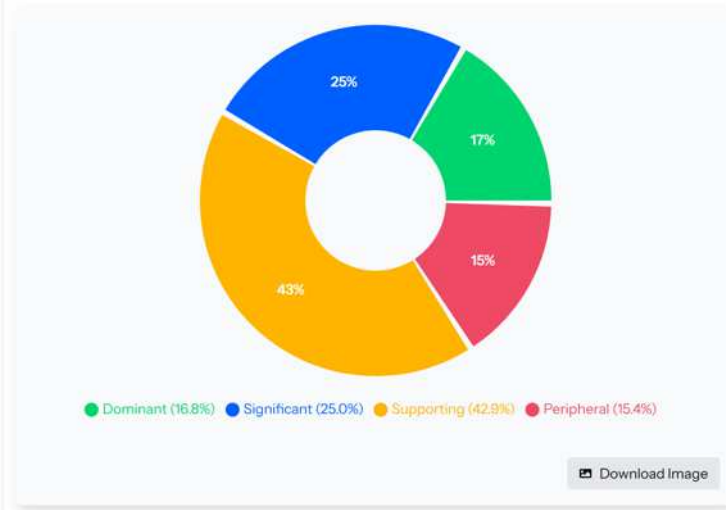
Brand Mention Position

69.4 vs 0

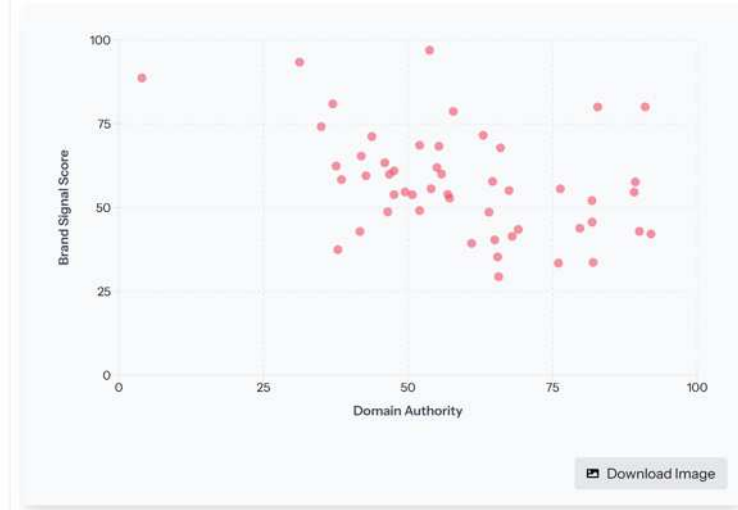
Download Data

## Performance Charts

### Brand Signal Tiers



### Campaigns



# Your content now needs to target

## Site authority:

**The what:**  
How powerful your site is

**The how:**  
Back links  
Powerful brand mentions



## Topical authority

**The what:**  
To be known for your offering

**The how:**  
Onsite content  
Relevant offsite campaigns



## Freshness

**The what:**  
How recent your brand was mentioned

**The how:**  
Continual PR and social activity



## Technical

**The what:**  
Make sure your site is technically sound for both LLM's and search

**The how:**  
Tech SEO  
CRO/UX

## Reviews

**The what:**  
Make sure you build good reviews via Trustpilot/Tripadvisor

**The how:**  
Encourage reviews and respond to all

## Social buzz

**The what:**  
Build brand awareness and buzz from social media

**The how:**  
Add social elements to all campaigns and encourage shares